

October 23rd, 2015

Honoring Our Hometown Heroes



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Greetings!

This week, I had the pleasure of honoring two of our local public servants at the Capitol in Madison.

On Mother's Day of this year, St. Croix County dispatcher Tom Barthman and St. Croix County Sheriff Sgt. James Sander saved the life of Emmett Smith, an infant whose parents found him choking in his crib.

We were fortunate enough to be able to honor Mr. Barthman and Sgt. Sander with the Assembly's Hometown Hero award, recognizing them for their outstanding public service.

Video of the presentation can be seen [here](#).

These men and women make our communities better, and safer, simply by performing their jobs day in and day out.

Sincerely,

Dean

Government Accountability Board Reform



Yesterday, the Assembly passed Assembly Bill 388, which I authored. The bill provides for two bipartisan commissions, made up of an equal number of Republicans and Democrats: The Elections Commission and Ethics Commission. They will oversee election administration as well as ethics and campaign finance.

Both commissions will be made up of 6 citizen members- 3 Republicans, and 3 Democrats. In the case of the Elections Commission, two of the members will be former clerks. Having commissioners with the day to day experience of administering elections will help ensure they run as smoothly as possible.

The GAB was created seven years ago as a well-intentioned experiment. However, two recent audits by the independent Legislative Audit Bureau identified a number of serious issues. For instance, for 16 consecutive elections, the agency failed to audit the voter rolls to ensure that felons were not voting, as they are required to do. For three consecutive general elections, they failed to audit voting machines as required. Finally, in the seven years the GAB has been in operation, they have failed to deal with hundreds of filed complaints, and have not developed any procedure for how

complaints are to be handled.

Summaries of the two audits may be read [here](#) and [here](#).

These new commissions, equally split between members of both parties, will provide better oversight, ensure that our ethics laws are enforced fairly, and monitor our elections.

Little Falls Dam

At a meeting in the Town of Hudson this week, the DNR revealed that the Little Falls Dam project may not be completed until 2019.

During the budget process, I fought for an extra \$5 million for this project precisely to avoid these kinds of delays. It is my hope that the DNR will continue to work with the Lake Association and the rest of the community to ensure this project is done in a timely manner, and on a more reasonable schedule.

UW-River Falls Visits the Capitol



UW-River Falls Cancellor Dean Van Galen was at the Capitol this week to talk with legislators. We're proud of the great work being

done on his campus!

New Blue Books Available

We still have plenty of 2015-16 Blue Books available and we're happy to provide them to you, free of charge. To have one mailed to you, contact my office with your name, address, and the number of Blue Books you would like. We look forward to hearing from you!

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